

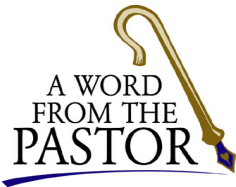
**ST MARK'S**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

---

January 2024  
Valley, Nebraska  
[www.StMarksValleyNE.com](http://www.StMarksValleyNE.com)  
402.359.2315

*from the Pastor...*



A WORD  
FROM THE  
**PASTOR**

Dear Everlasting Father, Son and Holy Spirit-

We have come to a new year, and whether we have arrived leaving behind us newfound joys, or a year of many trials and sorrows, we pause to give you thanks.

Thanks, dear Lord~

For being with us every moment of the past year-in joyous moments or in difficult ones, in celebrations and in grief~you are always with us. For that we give abiding thanks to you.

For all the seasons of our lives-the energy, excitement, beauty, and joys of Springtime-with it's new life, for the lessons, growth and the warmth of Summertime with it's seemingly endless days, and for the contentment and beauty of Autumn with its harvest and in-gathering-we give you thanks.

For Winter, yes even Winter, though it is cold and sometimes lonely and forbidding; it is also a time of wise silence, of seeing the structures of trees, without all the noisy and wild foliage that can obscure the strength and design you created at the heart of things.

Thank you for life-all of life! For the freshness of a new year, for you have made *all* things beautiful in their time. Although we don't like change, give us courage to let go of ways that have served their purpose-like a tree lets go of its leaves in Fall, help us to do the same, when necessary.

May we be given hope for this New Year, and forgiveness-of ourselves and of others when disappointed. Give us peace with you above all; grace to accept your forgiveness for our sins. Then please, give us peace —with others and even with ourselves.

Give us strength and faith to try again each day, and each month—knowing that you have created this cycle, this pattern of time—and knowing that you go with us into this new year. In fact, you go ahead of us also, and are even already there; beckoning us to step into this new year, this new time-towards dreams you have for us to experience, work for us to do. So, give us courage to look forward and not back...looking for the good and the beauty in each season of this year and in each season of our lives—for you have created and blessed it.

In every day, in each season help us to find something beautiful to thank you for and by your grace Lord, help us to be something beautiful for you and for others. Amen.

May God bless St. Mark's ministry and each of us in 2024!  
In Christ's service with you,  
+Pastor Barbara

*from the PMA...*

## **PARADE**

Ever since I was a child, the most inviting aspect of a New Year celebration was a parade. My parents even went so far as to order a set of colored slides of the parade entries so that we could use our projector at home and relive the pageantry any time we wanted. From the grand marshal in a classy convertible to the elaborate floats, everything indicated something magical was coming down that street. The marching bands were so coordinated that they matched each other step by step. The horse and rider entries were spirited and their costumes flowed and rippled as they passed by.

The enormous floats made of flowers and hand crafted expressed the skill and thought that went into the entry.

As we enter 2024, we too are in a parade of sorts. Whether you see yourself as part of a regimented marching band or endlessly waving to those you meet along the way; we are processing. Some move fast, some move slow, but...we are all moving forward. We all are called to work together to serve and share God's word. We may not lead and only be the servant that follows the horses with the shovel. Nevertheless, we serve. This January, step out and join the parade.

PMA Karen



**QUILTERS:** The Ties That Bind  
Quilters of St. Mark's will begin our quilting sessions on Monday Jan. 8 from 1-4 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Our group will also meet on Thursday, Jan. 25 this month also. Please come join us!



## **2023 COLLEGE GRADUATES**

Listed below are the students who have graduated from college this year of 2023. CONGRATULATIONS on a job well done!

### **HILLSDALE COLLEGE**

Alyssum J. Janke

Degree in Accounting

Graduated Summa cum Laude

### **WAYNE STATE**

e

Degree in Special; Education

Generalist K-12

Visit our website at [www.stmarksvalley.com](http://www.stmarksvalley.com)  
Cell Numbers: Pastor Barbara Oshlo – 202-5495  
Jan Reis – 490-2330



# COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Council did not meet in December.

## A PRAYER FOR ST MARK'S COUNCIL

Lord, by your Spirit, build our council together around a common mission to expand faith in all the communities touched by St. Mark's. Amen.



## “CAKES FOR COPE”

We all love to have a cake at celebrations of every kind. There are those who visit our COPE food pantry who are looking for a cake mix and can of frosting, but we don't often have those in stock. Our Sunday School children will be collecting these items for our mission project this year. Every 50 cake/frosting bags that we collect will trigger a cupcake day at Sunday School. It all starts January 14th and runs through March 24th. Let's bring a smile and a cake to those who need one!!! Watch for our display in the entry!!

## JANUARY NEWS FOR WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

### FAITH CIRCLE NEWS

FAITH CIRCLE will meet on **Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024** at the home of Carmen Dau in Elkhorn at **1 p.m.** Our study will be the Chapter on Hannah led by Sandy Trofholz. Sharon Renshaw and Carmen will serve refreshments.

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NEWS

### JOY/PEACE CIRCLE NEWS



CREATED BY VECTORPORTAL.COM

### From Laughing with Lutherans

In the family picture taken for our sons' confirmation, my husband wore his black suit and clerical collar. I displayed that photo beside my bed when hospitalized. An employee asked why we photographed the boys with the family priest. Mischievously, I was tempted to say, "That's the boys' father," and leave it at that.

## Birthdays in January



It has been requested to have personal birthdates put in the newsletter. If we are going to do this we need you to be sure that we have your birth date.

Please let the church office know your date if you have not already done so.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING"

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 – Danette Samson    | 21 – Paul Glidden     |
| 2 – Lane Wittgren     | 21 – Kristi Trost     |
| 3 – Kami Herrington   | 22 – Pam Cherny       |
| 5 – Douglas Larson    | 22 – Easton Hurt      |
| 5 – Lane Eggen        | 23 – Lily Pryor       |
| 6 – Jennifer Kerwin   | 24 – Isaiah Gutierrez |
| 8 – Emily Kahlandt    | 25 – Debbie Mumm      |
| 10 – Tyson Lewis      | 25 – Amber Bakken     |
| 11 – Melaney Franklin | 25 - Roberta Samson   |
| 14 – Sarah Hayden     | 26 – Kenzie Trost     |
| 14 – Amy Lewis        | 27 – Donna Hovendick  |
| 16 – Nicole Karloff   | 27 – Michele Hemphill |
| 16 – Erin Mahaffey    | 27 – Howard Renshaw   |
| 18 – Vicki Boardman   | 30 – Kris Pryor       |
| 18 – Ameri Ueckert    | 31 – Bailey Lathrop   |
| 21 – Robert Oshlo     | 31 – Kelli Sutter     |



Another successful Christmas of giving has happened! Thanks to all of you who chose to be involved in the COPE Christmas gift program this year. Because of all the community members and church families who were involved in this, we were able to offer 922 adults and children a brighter Christmas! This is an all-time high for our western Douglas County community. We know the need is there, and so many stepped up to help. I hope you all realize how important and generous it is to give a gift to those in need. May you all be blessed for the gifts you shared! A special thanks to Mike Sip for coming Friday night and Saturday morning (brrrrr) In his ho ho ho suit to hand out candy canes to the children.

## **2023 COLLEGE GRADUATES**

Listed below are the students who have graduated from college this year of 2023.  
**CONGRATULATIONS** on a job well done!



### **WARTBURG COLLEGE**

Rachel MacDonald  
Degree in Biology

### **NORTH WEST MISSOURI STATE**

Jessie Richmond  
Degree in Biopsychology  
and is going on to PA school

## SCRIPTURES FOR SUNDAYS IN JANUARY 2024

January 7

Epiphany of Our Lord

First Reading	Isaiah 60:1-6
Responsive Reading	Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14
Second Reading	Ephesians 3:1-12
Gospel Reading	Matthew 2:1-12

January 14

Second Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading	1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
Responsive Reading	Psalms 138:1-6, 13-18
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 6:12-20
Gospel Reading	John 1:43-51

January 21

Third Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading	Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Responsive Reading	Psalms 62:5-12
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Gospel Reading	Mark 1:14-20

January 28

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading	Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Responsive Reading	Psalms 111
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Gospel Reading	Mark 1:21-28